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b) evaluating the search string by comparing each of the characters of the search string to a plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets to determine one or more matches between the plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets and the search string; and

c) generating a search index based on the results of the evaluation of the search string and the plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets.

SUB C57
9. **(Amended)** A system for evaluating characters in an inputted search string to generate a search index, comprising:

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an input interface to accept an input of the characters of the search string, wherein the characters can be represented in any of a plurality of character sets corresponding to an undetermined language; and

a processor unit, connected to the input interface, the processor unit evaluating the search string by comparing each of the characters of the search string to a plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets to determine one or more matches between the plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets and the search string, and generating a search index based on the results of the evaluation of the search string and the plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets.

SUB C77
17. **(Amended)** A system for evaluating characters in an inputted search string to generate a search index, comprising:

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input interface means to accept an input of the characters of the search string, wherein the characters can be represented in any of a plurality of character sets corresponding to an undetermined language; and

processor means, connected to the input interface means, the processor means evaluating the search string by comparing each of the characters of the search string to a plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets to

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SUB C97
determine one or more matches between the plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets and the search string, and generating a search index based on the results of the evaluation of the search string and the plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets.

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25. **(Amended)** A storage medium for storing machine readable code, the machine readable code being executable to evaluate characters in an inputted electronic search string according to the steps of:

- a) accepting an input of the characters of the search string, wherein the characters can be represented in any of a plurality of character sets corresponding to an undetermined language;
- b) evaluating the search string by comparing each of the characters of the search string to a plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets to determine one or more matches between the plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets and the search string; and
- c) generating a search index based on the results of the evaluation of the search string and the plurality of pre-determined candidate character sets.

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33. **(Amended)** In a computer system comprising a processor, an input device and a storage device, which stores a character table bank comprising a predetermined number of columns and a number of character rows, each of which correspond to a universal code character, a method for implementing the processor to evaluate the universal code characters in an electronic search string, which is received at the input device, and enhance, based upon the evaluation of the electronic search string, a search index, which is accessible by the computer system and comprises a code page representing each of a plurality of the electronic search strings that are indexed, the method comprising:

enabling the processor to create a mask comprising a number of mask columns equivalent to the predetermined number of columns in the character table bank, wherein the mask columns contain an indication of the character sets against which the universal code characters of the electronic search string are to be evaluated;

enabling the processor to receive the electronic search string at the input device, the electronic search string comprising a plurality of characters, wherein the plurality of characters can be represented in any of a plurality of character sets corresponding to an undetermined language;

evaluating the plurality of universal code characters of the electronic search string received at the input device by accessing the corresponding character row of the character table bank for each of a predetermined number of the characters of the electronic search string and

performing a logical AND operation between each of the corresponding character rows and the mask;

filling a character match list with an entry for each of the character sets that result in a non-zero result after the logical AND operation;

returning the character match list; and

enhancing the search index by indicating for each code page the character sets returned in the character match list.

34. **(Amended)** A computer system for evaluating universal code characters in an electronic search string and enhancing a search index, the computer system comprising:

a processor,

an input device;

a storage device, which stores a character table bank comprising a predetermined number of columns and a number of character rows, each of which correspond to a universal code character;

wherein the processor evaluates the universal code characters in an electronic search string, which is received at the input device, and enhances, based upon the evaluation of the electronic search string, a search index, which is accessible by the computer system and comprises a code page representing each of a plurality of the electronic search string that are indexed;

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and wherein the processor creates a mask comprising a number of mask columns equivalent to the predetermined number of columns in the character table bank, wherein the mask columns contain an indication of the character sets against which the universal code characters of the electronic search string are to be evaluated;

and wherein the processor enables receipt of the electronic search string at the input device, the electronic search string comprising a plurality of characters, wherein the plurality of characters can be represented in any of a plurality of character sets corresponding to an undetermined language;

and wherein the processor evaluates the plurality of universal code characters of the electronic search string received at the input device by accessing the corresponding character row of the character table bank for each of a predetermined number of the characters of the electronic search string and performs a logical AND operation between each of the corresponding character rows and the mask;

and wherein the processor fills a character match list with an entry for

each of the character sets that result in a non-zero result after the logical AND operation;

and wherein the processor returns the character match list; and

wherein the processor enables enhancement of the search index by indicating for each code page the character sets returned in the character match list.

35. **(Amended)** A computer system for evaluating universal code characters in an electronic search string and enhancing a search index, the computer system comprising:

processor means,

input device means;

storage device means, which stores a character table bank comprising a predetermined number of columns and a number of character rows, each of which correspond to a universal code character;

wherein the processor means evaluates the universal code characters in an electronic search string, which is received at the input device means, and enhances, based upon the evaluation of the electronic search string, a search index, which is accessible by the computer system and comprises a code page representing each of a plurality of the electronic search string that are indexed;

and wherein the processor means creates a mask comprising a number of mask columns equivalent to the predetermined number of columns in the character table bank, wherein the mask columns contain an indication of the

character sets against which the universal code characters of the electronic search string are to be evaluated;

and wherein the processor means enables receipt of the electronic search string at the input device means, the electronic search string comprising a plurality of characters, wherein the plurality of characters can be represented in any of a plurality of character sets corresponding to an undetermined language;

and wherein the processor means evaluates the plurality of universal code characters of the electronic search string received at the input device means by accessing the corresponding character row of the character table bank for each of a predetermined number of the characters of the electronic search string and performs a logical AND operation between each of the corresponding character rows and the mask;

85 and wherein the processor means fills a character match list with an entry for each of the character sets that result in a non-zero result after the logical AND operation;

and wherein the processor means returns the character match list; and

wherein the processor means enables enhancement of the search index by indicating for each code page the character sets returned in the character match list.

36. **(Amended)** An electronic storage medium for storing machine readable code, the machine readable code enabling a computer system comprising a processor, an input device and a storage device, which stores a character table bank comprising a predetermined number of columns and a number of character

rows, each of which correspond to a universal code character, to execute the machine readable code and implement a method for evaluating the universal code characters in an electronic search string, which is received at the input device, and enhancing, based upon the evaluation of the electronic search string, a search index, which is accessible by the computer system and comprises a code page representing each of a plurality of the electronic search strings that are indexed, the method comprising:

enabling the processor to create a mask comprising a number of mask columns equivalent to the predetermined number of columns in the character table bank, wherein the mask columns contain an indication of the character sets against which the universal code characters of the electronic search string are to be evaluated;

35 enabling the processor to receive the electronic search string at the input device, the electronic search string comprising a plurality of characters, wherein the plurality of characters can be represented in any of a plurality of character sets corresponding to an undetermined language;

evaluating the plurality of universal code characters of the electronic search string received at the input device by accessing the corresponding character row of the character table bank for each of a predetermined number of the characters of the electronic search string and

performing a logical AND operation between each of the corresponding character rows and the mask;

filling a character match list with an entry for each of the character sets that result in a non-zero result after the logical AND operation;

returning the character match list; and

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enhancing the search index by indicating for each code page the character sets returned in the character match list.

SUB C117
37. (**New**) The method of claim 1, wherein the evaluating step compares each of the characters of the search string to one or more character sets of a character bank by parsing the characters of the search string and identifying the one or more character sets of the character bank that express each of the characters of the search string.

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38. (**New**) The method of claim 37, wherein the evaluating step further compares each of the character sets of the character bank corresponding to each of the characters of the search string to pre-selected character sets of a bit mask to determine a match between each of the character sets of the character bank that correspond to the characters of the search string and the characters sets of the bit mask.

39. (**New**) The method of claim 38, wherein a first column of the character bank correspond to a first column of the bit mask, wherein the first column of the character bank, and wherein the first column of bit mask correspond to the same character set.